Real initiatives and a just transition plan

Factsheet 2:
Clean Energy

About the Green Economy Network

The Green Economy Network (GEN) is a coalition of environmental groups, labour organizations and social justice and youth movements working together to find real solutions to tackle climate change. Spurred by Canada's failure to move toward an authentic green economy, leaders of more than twenty prominent groups formed GEN to push for a fundamental transformation of our industrial economy. Good green jobs are being created and can be further created in Canada to cut carbon emissions and develop true alternatives to the old ways of working. GEN is now at the forefront of a new social movement striving for a low-carbon, prosperous and just future for all Canadians.

The Transition

Canada finds itself at a crossroads. Canadians must choose between our old model of economy and society or charting a new path for building a green economy for the future. We can no longer afford an economic model that treats the planet and people as disposable goods. The key to unlock the door to either of thee two pathways is energy – the energy we use to fuel our industries, heat our homes and transport ourselves. Ultimately, this new economy must be fuelled not but "dirty" non-renewable forms of energy that comes from fossil fuels but by "clean" renewable forms of energy that are affordable to all Canadians.

Can we take on this challenge? Of course!

A green economy is more than an idea. There are lots of examples of the rapid expansion of renewable energy all over the world. In fact, Canada was even among the top ten in the world in installed wind energy and ranks in the top-ten by Ernst & Young in terms of attractiveness for renewable energy investments.
There is no question – we need more renewable energy so we can reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. Green energy is necessary to ensure that the future needs of Canadians are met while creating both jobs today and a clean planet for tomorrow. How? Read on.

Real initiatives – Renewable energy

To begin transitioning to the green economy of the future, the federal government needs to develop a renewable energy development strategy.

During this period, public investments totalling $4.65 billion need to e made to simulate the development of renewable energy sources with a priority being put on public sector owned and operated wind, solar, geothermal, and tidal power.
The plan should also include more restricted development of small-scale hydro and selected biofuels from biomass sources.

As promised, the Canadian government must also end subsidies to the oil and gas industry that heavily favour fossil fuel-based energy development at the expense of renewables.

Averaged out over a ten-year period, this public investment would amount to less than 2% of the annual federal budget.

This $4.65 billion investment will create tens of thousands of full-time jobs across the country.

www.greeneconomynet.ca
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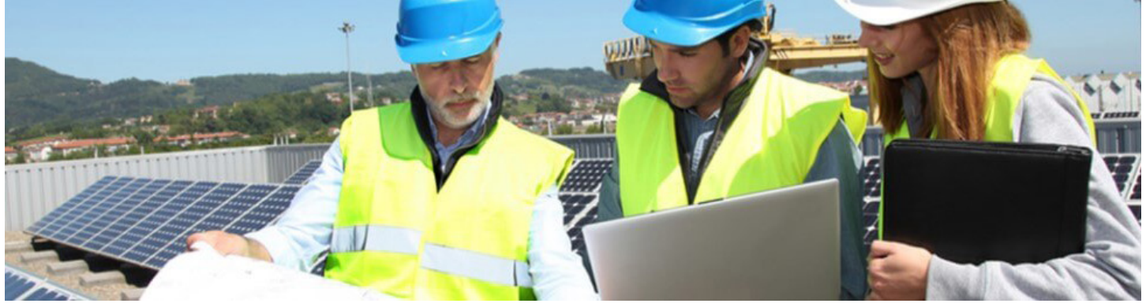
Real examples from accross Canada



Using pension funds to turn the tide

The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan recently announced it will put over $1 billion USD in the renewable energy company NextEra Energy Resources to gain partial ownership over its wind and solar assets. The Ontario Teachers' fund is one of many Canadian pension plans that have committed to having a net-zero portfolio by 2050. The fund is planning to reduce its 2019 portfolio carbon emissions by 45% by 2025, and by two-thirds by 2030. This type of initiative is helping turn the tide towards a green economy that is not dependent on investments in carbon intensive firms and industries. (1)

Building community power: The Gunn's Hill Wind Farm

Community-owned wind power is a model of green energy development that is growing in popularity across Canada and globally.

The Gunn's Hill Wind Farm, located in Norwich, Ontario, has ten wind turbines, which produce 18 MW of electricity—enough to provide power for over 6000 households in the community.

The project is owned by a unique partnership between Prowind, the Oxford Community Energy Co-operative, and the Six Nations of the Grand River Development Corporation. Homeowners in the area are given a chance to own a stake in the project, which provides them with a stable source of income. It has also provided over 200 construction jobs, and the project contributes to a community vibrancy fund, as well as a student bursary program for those training to work in the renewable energy industry. (2)

Hats off to Hat Smart in Medicine Hat, AB

The Hat Smart program offers homeowners and businesses in Medicine Hat, Alberta incentives to purchase a solar electric or a solar hot water system. The incentive covers up to $1,000 dollars per applicant. (3)

Toronto's Renewable Natural Gas Project

The City of Toronto now produces renewable energy from Green Bin compost waste. Using the raw biogas created by Green Bin organics and stored at the Dufferin Solid Waste Management Facility, the City creates renewable natural gas and uses it to help power municipal vehicles and buildings.

Toronto has also identified four additional landfill sites for potential biogas upgrading. These sites could produce enough gas to fulfil the entirety of Toronto's natural gas needs. (4)

Halifax Solar City: Community Solar Hot Water Heaters

The Halifax Solar City project, spearheaded by the Halifax Regional Municipality, provides property owners wanting to invest in solar panels for heating household hot water with loans to do so. The program saves businesses and homeowners thousands of dollars a year while lowering carbon emissions. (5)

Vancouver Renewable Energy Cooperative

The Vancouver Renewable Energy Cooperative (VREC) is a workers' cooperative that was created in 2004 to sell, install and provide consulting services for homeowners wishing to install renewable energy systems in Vancouver, BC. They work with solar photovoltaics, solar hot water, solar pool heating and wind energy and rent portable power systems and sell carbon offsets to help fund renewable energy projects. (6)

References & Resources

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